



# The Channing Connection

CHANNING MEMORIAL CHURCH  
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

Volume 27, Issue 6

June 2020

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**We are a Welcoming  
Congregation!**



## Wayside Pulpit

I believe in the sun even  
when it is not shining.

—Warsaw Ghetto Victim

## June Minister's Column



I always love this time of year, when the bugs start their loud, evening chorus, when daily walks no longer require a sweatshirt, when I can watch the critters jumping from tree to tree during my morning coffee. And yet, this spring is different. We are now routinely wearing masks, standing six feet apart, and only leaving home for the essentials. This can be hard, lonely, and stressful, and perhaps lead to a financial burden. Yet, this is what keeps us, and those around us, safe.

The Board met to discuss the most recent guidance issued by the state, county, and the UUA. The Board decided to meet virtually for worship through December and to hold small groups virtually through the end of August. At that point, we will re-evaluate. I want to reiterate here that we will revisit the issue at that time, we may not be together for well past December.

I know for many folks, this news will be hard to digest. We all miss each other and that physical togetherness. Yet as we hold space for this, let us be reminded of our Seven Principles of Unitarian Universalism, and the key pieces of those principles that guide us in staying home.

Religious gatherings are considered high-risk. When we consider gathering, we always need to think of our interdependent web. Each of our actions has a ripple effect, affecting so many of those around us. When making choices about going out, we need to especially think of those vulnerable folks – the elderly, those with pre-existing conditions. Risk-taking affects more than our individual selves. Let us remember, many of our members are high-risk.

We also need to keep in mind accessibility and inclusion in our worship spaces. Joining together too soon could not only put people's health at risk, but we risk exclusion of those vulnerable folks, with some of us gathering together while many of us simply cannot. It is so important to make our worship space accessible, even if that means putting off meeting in person for a bit.

*(Continued on page 2)*

**Minister**

Reverend Jane Smith

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**Newsletter Editors:**

Cathy Fu  
Ken Grim

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*To place an event on the calendar, in the Order of Service announcements, in the newsletter or in an allchanning email, send an email to: [newsshare@channingmc.org](mailto:newsshare@channingmc.org)*

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Send submittals for the July issue of *The Channing Connection* to [newsshare@channingmc.org](mailto:newsshare@channingmc.org) by **7:00 p.m. on Sunday, June 21 2020.**

(Minister's column, continued from page 1)

Our Sixth Source calls us to "heed the guidance of reason and the results of science," and as a faith community we are doing just that. Know that we are committed to re-evaluating as the situation changes, and that our greatest commitment is to keep this sacred community safe. We remain guided by our Unitarian Universalist values.

Spirit of love and life,  
Be with us as we navigate these anxious, uncertain times. Let us know that today, as in every day, we are loved, cared for, and held in sacred community.

May it be so, and Amen.

Warmly, *Rev. Jane*

### Board Bits



The May 19 Board meeting covered three main topics: the Minister's report, review of the pandemic impacts, and follow-ups on the space search plan.

We are still seeing a high attendance for Sunday services as well as interest from new visitors. We discussed the Linden Hall lease and how to deal with the changing guidance for church gatherings. We pondered how long we should continue with online services and when we should allow small groups to gather at our Park Ave. space.

The decision was made that we will not have any gatherings at the Park Ave. house through August and we will revisit the topic for September and beyond. The space search is continuing slowly. We contacted \*Stewardship 4 Us,\* a UUA related organization, for guidance with our search. We are still finalizing our contract with Linda Odum, the realtor we are working with.

*Dan V., Board Scribe*

## President's Column



At the May board meeting, the board looked at the UUA, county, and state guidance, as well as information from a webinar on the dangers of group singing at this time. We decided at this time to not meet in person for worship through the end of December. If there is a dramatic change in the virus situation, the board is free to re-evaluate earlier, but this helps the congregation and our volunteers shift our energy and focus to maintaining our virtual connection over several months. We can focus on other projects and move the congregation forward.

We also decided to not allow small group gatherings nor renters at Park Avenue through the end of August. This decision will be re-evaluated in September.

What follows are my thoughts in my last column as your president. I am not speaking on behalf of the board, but rather sharing my own thoughts about how we can navigate this time and the complex decisions that we face.

First, we need to look to our mission: Invite seekers into spiritual community, connect souls in mystery and wonder, and ignite compassion into action. How can we best fulfill this mission? This mission makes us, as a church, have different concerns than other organizations and businesses during this crisis.

The central question for us, in my view, will be: What is the quality of our “invitation” and “connection” online, versus what we could offer if we did meet in person with many alterations in place, such as no singing and masks required? Over time as restrictions lift and the virus situation improves, we can consider when we can better fulfill our mission with in-person worship or small gatherings. When we do meet in person, we will want to think about offering clear masks and face shields to attendees if face coverings are still recommended by the authorities.

Second, we need to look to our values and principles as Unitarian Universalists. We subscribe to seven principles. The UUA’s statements about why they are recommending that congregations focus on a virtual presence through May 2021 are grounded in UU values. Of course, we can agree to uphold UU values and then have disagreements on how best to apply these values. As we navigate through this difficult landscape, it will be helpful for teams and committees to periodically revisit UU values and then see how that helps to inform decisions.

Third, we should think back to some of the lessons offered in the Small Congregation webinars offered in the past year. One theme of the webinars was that as a small church, we have strengths and should focus on those strengths, rather than try to fulfill all possible needs and wants. We run the risk of volunteer burnout if we try to offer all the programs of a larger church. Extending these points to the pandemic, we need to be mindful that everyone is collectively going through a stressful time. People are sleeping more, feeling tired, dealing with financial stresses, having children home from school, and worrying about health. Our volunteers may not have the same energy reserves to give to the church as before. The best way to support our members and friends may be to choose a few areas of focus and let go of other areas for the time being. I see connection and emotional support as key areas of focus.

Finally, I want to thank this year’s board for their work during this challenging time: Evelyn, Maureen, Ken, Kathleen, Rev. Jane, and Colleen. I am also grateful to the new members joining the board next year for bravely stepping in: Mel, David, and Patrick.

## Stewardship Corner



### **Special offering**

You contributed \$950 through special offerings in May for the Community Assistance Network (CAN), bringing our current Westside Shelter Fund balance to \$1,017. Thank you for your generous donations.

### **Payroll Protection Plan**

Based on advice from the UUA, we have applied for and received a Payroll Protection Plan loan to assure the continued salary and benefits of our Minister and Music Director.

### **Reminders**

If you have incurred expenses on behalf of the church, please submit requests for reimbursement by the third week in June. Our fiscal year ends on June 30 and we try to close the books by the first week in July. Cathy and I are going into the office less frequently these days, so we can't guarantee that requests that are submitted late will be reimbursed. We will accept email requests to [treasurer@channingmc.org](mailto:treasurer@channingmc.org). Attach receipts to the email if you can; otherwise, mail them separately to the Park Ave. office. You don't have to complete an "official" reimbursement request as long as it is clear what the expense is for and who needs to be paid. If you anticipate a late June expense, just let me know and submit the receipts as soon as they are available.

The Board and Stewardship Team are currently fine-tuning the budget for fiscal year July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021. If you lead a committee or team that will need to spend money next fiscal year, please send a budget request to me as soon as possible if you haven't already done so. The Board will approve the final budget at its next meeting on June 16.

*Evelyn Grim, Treasurer*

### **Stewardship Update**

#### **April Year to Date**



Total Operating Income	\$136,305
Total Operating Expenses	\$130,330
Difference	\$5,975



## Soul Matters for June

### **Our Soul Matters theme for the month of June is Compassion.**

I truly believe we can never focus too much on the power of compassion and the power of practicing this daily. We care for ourselves and we care for one another. I lift up a quote from American Trappist monk, writer, and theologian Thomas Merton, “The whole idea of compassion is based on a keen awareness of the interdependence of all these living beings, which are all part of one another and all involved in one another.” We are more aware than ever of our interdependent web. That compassion we so generously offer others ripples out to bring peace and kindness to those we have never even met, and it begins with self.

Each month, we offer Small Groups to reflect on the monthly theme. These Small Groups are special because they allow each member to deeply engage with the topic in multiple ways. In preparation for each month’s Small Group, I will send each group member a packet. You are invited to select from this packet one spiritual exercise and one question to reflect on before our meeting together. While reviewing the packet ahead of time is a great way to prepare for group, please do not let a busy schedule deter you from participating. If you are feeling overwhelmed with anxiety or uncertainty, do not feel obligated to complete the packet. Whatever amount of time you are able to dedicate to preparation is just the right amount of time!

I ask that you sign up ahead of time. Please provide me your email address so that I can send you the packet to review. If the slot that you can attend is full, just let me know. We have opened our small groups to the public to share our gifts with the community. Feel free to invite friends. I am excited to explore the theme of Compassion with you!

**Young adult group (20s, 30s, 40s):**  
**Wednesday**, June 17, 7-9pm

**Groups of all ages:**  
**Saturday**, June 13, 2:30-4:30pm  
**Saturday**, June 20, 2:30-4:30pm

—*Rev. Jane*

## New CER Primary Contact!

**From Rev. Megan Foley on the UUA Central East Region (CER) website:**



Sana Saeed

Although we're sad to see the interim tenure of the fantastic Paula Cole Jones come to an end on June 30th, we are delighted to announce that we've hired a new, permanent field staff person to begin with us on July 6th: **Sana Saeed**. Sana has been working as a chaplain at the University of Pennsylvania and is slated to see the Ministerial Fellowship Committee soon to enter Fellowship as a UU minister. You may have interacted with her during her internship and subsequent work at the UU Ministers Association.

We hired Sana because her skill set so closely matches what we've experienced as the variety of needs, hopes and plans for the range of congregations she'll be serving in Maryland, Pennsylvania, the Delmarva peninsula and New Jersey. We see her as amply able to support and co-create with our congregations in these areas.

Sana will be in touch in the summer months to introduce herself to her primary contact congregations, and you'll see her working with the team with our collaborative efforts as well. Another big new chapter begins for all of us!

### General Assembly Countdown



**June 24—28, 2020**

Have you wanted to attend General Assembly (GA) but didn't feel up to travelling? This could be your year: GA is completely virtual this year. The theme is *Rooted, Inspired, & Ready!* See <https://www.uua.org/ga> for information and inspiration

### Get Ready for...



### Zoom Pictionary!

**Friday, June 19 at 7 pm**

If you've never experienced "drawing while Zooming," you're in for a treat.

Mark your calendars now. Zoom info will be shared in the weekly emails starting in June.



### From Rev. Jane— Virtual Flower Communion

Each year in early June we gather one Sunday as a church to celebrate Flower Communion. Traditionally, in this sacred ritual, each person brings their own flower to the sanctuary to be blessed and shared with the congregation. Each congregant leaves with a different flower than they brought with them.

This June, we find ourselves in the midst of online worship. While this prevents us from physically sharing our flowers, this does not keep us from celebrating! We will still gather in sacred ritual, bringing our special gifts of late spring and sharing joy with our fellow congregants.

This year, we ask that you send us a picture of your flower. When we gather, we will virtually share these special pictures. Also, send us a blessing. As we enter this season of blossoming flowers and lush green, consider a hope, wish or blessing you would like to offer a fellow congregant. Each blessing should be no more than a couple of sentences. Each of us will send in a hope, wish, or blessing, and each of us will leave service with a new wish or blessing

Please send your picture and blessing to Eric S. by June 3. On June 7, as we gather for worship, we will share these pictures and share these wishes or blessings. Each person will leave with an anonymous special blessing.

While we are prevented from gathering in person, we are not prevented from joining together, virtually, for the sacred gatherings and rituals we hold so dear. I look forward to this special, new way of welcoming summer with all of you. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Warmly,  
Rev. Jane

### Channing Book Club Has A New Read



We have selected *If We Can Keep It: How the Republic Collapsed and How It Might be Saved* by Michael Tomasky

Quoted from Amazon: *Tomasky ranges across centuries and disciplines to show how America has almost always had two dominant parties that are existentially, and often violently, opposed. ...not content merely to diagnose these problems, Tomasky offers a provocative agenda for how we can help fix our broken political system—from ranked-choice voting and at-large congressional elections to expanding high school civics education nationwide.*

We invite everyone to be a part of this group. The discussion will be on **Thursday, June 11 at 10 am.** Location TBA.

— Ken H.

### Food and Love Available in OEC



The Ellicott City Partnership has a list where you can find local businesses offering delivery, pick-up, or online shopping options during the pandemic:

<https://visitoldellicottcity.com/support-oec/>

Support local businesses and get some good stuff!

### COVID-19 Memorial at GA



If you have lost family members, fellow congregants, friends, classmates, or co-workers to COVID-19, and you are comfortable with us holding the realities of that grief with you, we would like to include their names in a memorial moment for the Sunday morning worship service at General Assembly.

To help us honor them, please send their name, UU congregation (if any), and age (if known) to [gacovidmemorial@gmail.com](mailto:gacovidmemorial@gmail.com) by no later than Saturday, June 20, 2020.

### UUtheVote



VOTE

We've seen the "breaking news" on cable, broadcast and streaming television, the headlines that interrupt our web browsing—all reporting about brave Wisconsinites standing six feet apart to exercise their right to vote in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. We've read the stories about the absentee ballot fiasco in Ohio. These stories tell us one thing for certain—that our democracy is in danger. Efforts to disenfranchise certain ethnic groups, to make it difficult to register and to vote are prevalent throughout the country. And the Covid-19 pandemic has given new opportunities to those who wish to suppress votes and voters. For this reason, the Unitarian Universalist Association has launched [UUtheVote](#), a call to UUs to ensure that our nation conducts free and fair elections

Channing Memorial Church, as part of the Baltimore UU Cluster and in partnership with the UU Legislative Ministry of Maryland, is establishing an Electoral Justice Team to coordinate ways that our members, friends, young adults and youth can help to protect and promote our democracy.

We will be distributing a survey soon that will list various opportunities and ask you to identify ways you are willing to participate. Opportunities might include volunteering with voter outreach efforts of local organizations, phone-banking and text-banking with a local justice partner organization to get out the vote, registering high school students who may be eligible to vote in November 2020, providing assistance in completing mail-in ballots to those who are impaired, and more.

If you are interested in serving on the Channing Electoral Justice Team, please contact Jim C. or Angela L.

As Rev. Dr. Susan Frederick-Gray has asked us to respond, let's make Channing "a hub of spiritual sustenance" during this coming election and work to protect and sustain our democracy.

Yours in faith and justice

*Angela L. and Jim C.*



## A New Adult RE Offering: Clearing as a Spiritual Practice



No one would argue that most of us do too much or have more possessions than we need. Or both. With our lives swept up in a swirl of attachments, worry, and endless, mechanical "doing," our minds become fuzzy on what stays and what goes, what matters and what doesn't. As humans, it is in our nature to experience clarity and spaciousness all the time. The problem is that we lose focus, get off balance, and forget how.

So how do we dial it back or even begin to reduce the noise, release the stuff that doesn't serve and support us, and connect with that which makes our hearts sing?

One minute at a time. In present time.


No matter how minuscule the task or effort, the fact is that clearing anything consciously and gently ... creates an energetic opening-- a spaciousness-- that will work on you slowly and surely to soften your attachments to things, beliefs, and outcomes.

-Stephanie Bennett Vogt, *Your Spacious Self*

In this 6 week course, we'll explore space clearing from the inside out with the help of Stephanie Bennett Vogt's book, *Your Spacious Self*. Our six weeks of work and play will include one Zoom gathering per week, plus (manageable) reading and practice outside of class. Course work (in and outside of Zoom class sessions) will include reading, reflection, journaling, gentle practical work, meditation, and verbal sharing. *Stephanie Bennett Vogt's approach strongly emphasizes the inner dimension of clearing.*

Participants will need access to a copy of *Your Spacious Self*. *The book is available on [Amazon](#) in paperback and Kindle.* (Used copies are also available on Amazon, but for only a little less than the Kindle price.)

The course will begin the week of June 14th. The weekly Zoom meeting day and time are TBD with input from those interested. Please contact the course facilitator, Ostara, if you're interested in participating.



### Channing Youth Group

The youth group has been meeting regularly during the pandemic. If someone in your family is of high school or college age and might be interested in being a part of this group, contact Lynne S.

## Music Treats from Julie



Grace Chorale, First Unitarian Congregational Society of Brooklyn, and First Presbyterian Brooklyn came together in a Virtual Choir and Orchestra to perform "How Can I Keep from Singing": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VLPP3XmYxXg>

Holston Valley UU Choir put together a virtual performance of This Little Light of Mine: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pPMtVvsUpAA>

First UU Church in Concord, NH did "When I First Came In": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gc3Rlzw4cc>

Finally, the UU Church of Long Beach performed the Appalachian Folksong "Bright Morning Star." <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0rsEoa5fM08>

## New Google Doc Has All The Answers



Well, not all the answers, but at least a list of **upcoming church events and Zoom links**. Thanks to Newsshare gurus Angela L. and Ken H. for keeping the list current. Check it out!

## Weekly Opportunities for Connection

### **Sundays**

Church service at 10 am.

### **Tuesdays**

1—4 pm Minister's Office Hours, now by appointment

7—8 pm Spiritual Coffee Hour

### **Wednesdays**

7—8 pm Joys and Concerns Candle Lighting

### **Fridays**

11 am—12 noon Spiritual Coffee Hour



All activities by Zoom until further notice. Schedule can change— look for weekly emails with links and info.



Please join the **Poor People's Campaign**: A National Call for Moral Revival (PPC) on May 28th and again on **June 20th, 2020** as the movement goes digital and urges folks to “*Stay in place! Stay alive! Organize, Organize, Organize!*” Join the #PoorPeoplesCampaign for 50 Days of Action: [June2020.org](https://June2020.org). The [UUA](#), [SideWithLove](#), and UUSJ have endorsed the PPC -- a leadership [council](#) has been formed (recent [UU history with PPC here](#)).

To show that UUs will rise-up for a justice-centered vision of American society, you can:

- Attend the May 28th Digital Mass Meeting ([direct Facebook link](#))
- Use the [special UU RSVP](#) for the June 20th Digital Justice Gathering
- View the 90 second [PSA](#)
- Distribute this PPC [Flyer](#) for June 20th
- Use the PPC [Social Media Toolkit](#) to spread the word

We understand that COVID-19 has forced the nation into an unprecedented emergency, unlike anything in our living memories. Yet the PPC's [Souls of Poor Folks Audit](#) and [Moral Budget](#) show that the current emergency results from a deeper and much longer-term crisis — that of poverty and inequality, and of a society that has long ignored the needs of 140 million people who are poor or one emergency away from being poor. Long after the pandemic ends, folks will continue to suffer needlessly unless we change the moral compass of our democracy.

Recall, in 1968, **Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.** and many others -- including UUs -- called for a “revolution of values” in America and sought to build a broad movement that could unite poor and dispossessed communities across the country. Today, the PPC has picked up this work. People across the nation have joined under the banner of the Campaign to confront the interlocking evils of systemic racism, poverty, climate change and ecological devastation, militarism and the war economy, and the distorted moral narrative of religious nationalism.

As UUs we are called to live our values and drive for justice. We were present for the civil rights movement and we must be present for this new moral fusion movement. So we educate, mobilize, and advocate to change the structural oppressions that constrain the greatness of our nation. That means we are for just, compassionate, and sustainable policies and programs to address what **Rev. Dr. William Barber II** terms the “systemic policy violence against poor people” and the dispossessed in American society ([Statement: Budget Committee](#), U.S. House of Representatives).

June 20th is a movement milestone, not the goal. The goal is a beloved community of our nation's peoples. Join the movement!

*Pablo DeJesus* , Executive Director, UUSJ

# June 2020



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
	1	2 1-4 pm Minister's Office Hours  4-5 pm Spiritual Coffee Hour	3  Joys and Con- cerns Candle Lighting 7 pm	4  Men's Group 10 am—12 n	5 Spiritual Coffee Hour 11 am—12 n  Choir online chat 7:30 pm	6	
7 10 am Sunday Service Flower Ceremony  	8	9 1-4 pm Minister's Office Hours  4-5 pm Spiritual Coffee Hour	10  Joys and Con- cerns Candle Lighting 7 pm	11  Channing Book Club 10 am	12 Spiritual Coffee Hour 11 am—12 n	13	
14 10 am Sunday Service    <b>Flag Day</b>	15	16 1-4 pm Office Hours  4-5 pm Spiritual Coffee Hour  7 pm Board of Trustees	17  Joys and Con- cerns Candle Lighting 7 pm	18	19 Spiritual Coffee Hour 11 am—12 n  Pictionary Game Night 7—9 pm  Choir online chat 7:30 pm	20 Men's Group 10 am—12 n   <b>SUMMER SOLSTICE</b>	
21 10 am Sunday Service   <b>HAPPY FATHER'S DAY</b>	22	23 1-4 pm Minister's Office Hours  4-5 pm Spiritual Coffee Hour	24  Joys and Con- cerns Candle Lighting 7 pm	25	26 Spiritual Coffee Hour 11 am—12 n	27	
28 10 am Sunday Service	29	30 1-4 pm Minister's Office Hours  4-5 pm Spiritual Coffee Hour	<b><i>All events *online* unless otherwise noted</i></b>				

Channing Memorial Church  
Unitarian Universalist  
3677 Park Avenue  
Ellicott City, MD 21043

On the web:  
[www.ChanningMC.org](http://www.ChanningMC.org)

**Channing Memorial Church, Unitarian Universalist**

Our mission is to invite seekers into spiritual community, connect souls in mystery and wonder, and ignite compassion into action.

We are a church of liberal religious worship that inspires its members on their spiritual journeys. We derive a common spiritual center from Jewish and Christian roots while drawing inspiration from other world religions; promote religious education for all ages; create a welcoming, supporting, and caring community; and work together to build a better world.

**Directions to Linden Hall: From the South:**

Drive north on Rt. 29 from south of Columbia.  
Take Rt. 108 West.  
Turn right onto Columbia Road.  
Turn right at the first light on Old Annapolis Road.  
You will be behind the Dorsey Search Village Center. Take the third entry road on the left (Old Route 108).  
The parking lot is immediately on your right. Overflow spaces available at other locations in the Village Center.

**From Baltimore:**

Take 70W to Rt. 29 south.  
Take Rt. 108 West.  
Turn right onto Columbia Road.  
Turn right at the first light on Old Annapolis Road.  
You will be behind the Dorsey Search Village Center. Take the third entry road on the left (Old Route 108).  
The parking lot is immediately on your right. Overflow spaces available at other locations in the Village Center.